

**REMARKS**

(1) Claims 2-23 are pending in the present application. Applicant cancelled claim 1 and amended claims 2, 5, and 8-17 herein. Applicant added new claim 23 herein, but no new matter has been added.

(2) The Office Action cited U.S. Patent 6,427,885, by Dexel, entitled *Spare Tire Lock and Lug Wrench Placement Device* (referred to as "Dexel" hereinafter).

(3) Claims 3, 4, 6-8, 11, and 15 were objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim (former independent claim 1). But, the Office Action stated that claims 2, 4, 6-8, 11, and 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Claim 15***

Applicant has rewritten claim 15 in independent form including all of the limitations of its base claim, i.e., claim 1. Thus, claim 15 has not been narrowed or broadened by such rewriting. Therefore, in agreement with the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 15 is now allowable in its independent form.

***Claims 3, 4, 6-8, and 11***

Applicant amended claims 8 and 11 to depend from independent claim 15. Claims 3, 4, 6, and 7 now depend from independent claim 15 through other intervening dependent claims. Thus, claims 3, 4, 6-8, and 11 are allowable because of their dependency from independent claim 15.

(4) Claims 1, 2, 12-14, and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as assertedly being anticipated by Dexel. Claims 5, 9, 10, and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as assertedly being unpatentable over Dexel. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for the following reasons.

***Claim 1***

Applicant cancelled claim 1.

***Claims 2, 5, 9, 10, 12-14, 16, and 17***

Applicant amended claims 2, 5, 9, 10, 12-14, 16, and 17 to depend from independent claim 15. Thus, claims 2, 5, 9, 10, 12-14, 16, and 17 are allowable because of their dependency from independent claim 15.

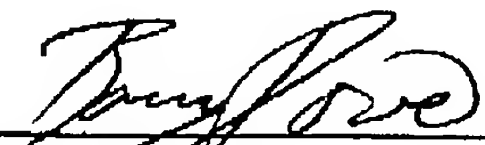
(5) Applicant acknowledges and thanks the Examiner for allowing **claims 18-22** in the Office Action.

(6) New **claim 23** depends from claim 15. Thus, claim 23 is allowable because of its dependency from independent claim 15.

(7) In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance and request that the Examiner pass the case to issuance. If the Examiner should have any questions, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact Applicant's attorney at the address below. No fee is believed due in connection with this filing. However, in the event that there are any fees due, please charge the same, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-1065.

Respectfully submitted,

9/10/2004  
Date

  
Barry W. Dove  
Attorney for Applicant  
Reg. No. 45,862

SLATER & MATSIL, L.L.P.  
17950 Preston Rd.  
Suite 1000  
Dallas, Texas 75252  
Tel. 972-732-1001  
Fax: 972-732-9218